Labour Market and
Economic Indicators Dashboard

Agriculture and Agri-Food Industry

2006

Building and Educating
Tomorrow's Workforce

Alberta

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Introduction

By March 2006, 34 of 53 occupational groups tracked by the Alberta government showed an unemployment rate of three per cent or less, indicating skill and labour shortages. This document presents a series of economic indicators to identify labour and skill shortages or surpluses in industry sectors.

Indicators such as the unemployment rate, vacancy rate, hiring difficulty rate and demand-supply ratio[1] are used to determine the presence of shortages or surpluses now and in the future. This tool should not be used to make decisions. Instead, the intent of this dashboard is to spark discussion and give a snapshot of where the occupational cluster is likely to be within the next 10-year period. Additional provincial labour market information, including regional information, can be obtained at www.hre.gov.ab.ca/lmi to assist with decision making.

What is a shortage?

Shortages were determined by looking at the unemployment, vacancy, and hiring difficulty rates, as well as the demand-supply ratio for a number of occupational clusters within sectors. Occupations are sorted by industry sector as outlined in Appendix A.

This booklet uses a traffic light system to help define shortages, based on the following:

Unemployment: If the unemployment rate of an occupation is less than three per cent, there is a shortage.

Vacant jobs: If the vacancy rate of an occupation is more than two per cent, there is a shortage.

Hiring difficulty: If the hiring difficulty rate of an occupation is more than 25 per cent, there is a shortage.

Demand and supply of workers: A demand-supply ratio of greater than one indicates a supply shortage while a ratio of less than one indicates a supply surplus.

Occupational clusters are coded red, yellow or green based on the following:[2]

Red – All indicators show shortage OR the vacancy rate is over five per cent and the reported hiring difficulty over 40 per cent.

Yellow – One or more indicators show shortage.

Green – All indictors show a surplus.

[1] See Appendix B for more information about the unemployment rate, vacancy rate, hiring difficulty rate and/or demand-supply ratio.

[2] See Appendix C for more detailed information on the colour coding for each occupation.

Agriculture and Agri-Food

This industry employs people in primary agriculture and secondary food and beverage processing industries. This sector involves the value-added manufacturing of food products and beverages utilizing Alberta's agricultural resources.[3]

Industry Challenges and Issues

This industry is expected to continue to emphasize more value-added production through food processing, and to continue to diversify into alternative crops. The trend towards healthier eating habits could lead to increased opportunities for fruit and vegetable production and organically grown products.

While there will be a more diverse range of employment opportunities in agriculture operations, such as technical agronomic, management, marketing and product development occupations, the industry is expected to lose workers to other sectors. These sectors include the oil and gas industries, where wages are higher and jobs are plentiful.

Employment levels in primary agriculture in Alberta have been in long-term decline because of the shift from small family farms to large-scale family and corporate agricultural enterprises. Labour issues in the rural economy go beyond the attraction and retention of agricultural workers. Young people need to be retained in rural communities and new workers need to be attracted to maintain vibrant communities that provide a broad range of services.

Occupational Cluster	2003[4]	2005	2015
Administrative and Regulatory Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Administrative Services Managers	Concern	Concern	Surplus

[3] This information is based on Government of Canada statistics and projections for the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) major group 23.

[4] The rationale for using 2003, 2005, and 2015 as years to show trend is indicated in Appendix D.

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Administrative Support Clerks	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Agriculture and Horticulture Workers	Concern	Shortage	Surplus
Announcers and Other Performers	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Auditors, Accountants and Investment Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Central Control and Process Operators in Manufacturing and Processing	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Chemcal Engineers	Concern	Shortage	Shortage
Cleaners	Surplus	Concern	Surplus

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Clerical Occupations, General Office Skills	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Clerical Supervisors	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Computer and Information Systems Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Contractors and Supervisors, Trades and Related Workers	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Contractors, Operators and Supervisors in Agriculture, Horticulture and Aquaculture	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Crane Operators, Drillers and Blasters	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Electrical Trades and Telecommunication Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Facility Operation and Maintenance Managers	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Fishing Vessel Masters and Skippers and Fishermen/women	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Heavy Equipment Operators	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Human Resources and Business Service Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Labourers in Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Legislators and Senior Management	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Library, Correspondence and Related Information Clerks	Surplus	Concern	Shortage

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Life Science Professionals	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Longshore Workers and Material Handlers	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Machine Operators and Related Workers in Fabric, Fur and Leather Products Manufacturing	Concern	Shortage	Surplus
Machine Operators and Related Workers in Food, Beverage and Tobacco Processing	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Machine Operators and Related Workers in Textile Processing	Concern	Shortage	Surplus
Mail and Message Distribution Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Managers in Communication (except Broadcasting)	Concern	Concern	Surplus

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Managers in Engineering, Architecture, Science Information Systems	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Managers in Financial and Business Services	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Managers in Manufacturing and Utilities	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Managers in Protective Service	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Office Equipment Operators	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Policy and Program Officers, Researchers and Consultants	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Primary Production Labourers	Concern	Concern	Surplus

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Printing Press Operators, Commercial Divers and Other Trades and Related Occupations, Not Elsewhere Classified	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Recording, Scheduling and Distributing Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Sales and Service Supervisors	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Sales, Marketing and Advertising Managers	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Secretaries, Recorders and Transcriptionists	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Stationary Engineers and Power Station and System Operators	Concern	Shortage	Shortage
Supervisors, Assembly and Fabrication	Concern	Concern	Shortage

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Supervisors, Processing Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Technical Occupations in Architecture, Drafting, Surveying and Mapping	Surplus	Shortage	Shortage
Technical Occupations in Civil, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Technical Occupations in Computer and Information Systems	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Technical Occupations in Life Sciences	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Trades Helpers and Labourers	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Writing, Translating and Public Relations Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus